

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment amends the specification to include the Related Application Information, including the U.S. parent application information, and the priority Japanese patent application information. Approval and entry are respectfully requested.

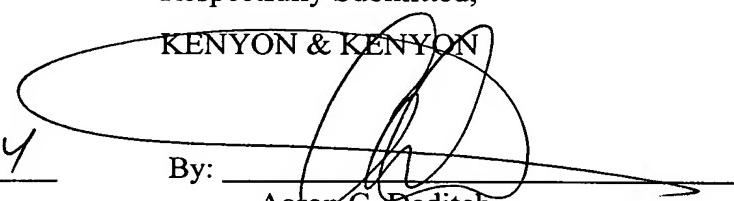
This Preliminary Amendment also cancels, without prejudice, claims 1 to 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 26, 29, 31, 33 to 36, 38, 40, 42, 43, 44, 46, 48, 51, 53, 55 to 58, 60, 62, 64, 65, 66, 68, 70, 73, 75 and 77, which were ultimately allowed (or canceled without prejudice as to claims 19, 43, and 65) in the parent case, U.S. Patent App. Ser. No. 09/577,511.

Accordingly, claims 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 37, 39, 41, 45, 47, 49, 50, 52, 54, 59, 61, 63, 67, 69, 71, 72, 74 and 76 are now pending.

Claims 13, 28, 30, 32, 37, 50, 52, 54, 59, 72, 74 and 76 are amended without prejudice, so as to conform to the now canceled amended claims of the parent case, U.S. Pat. App. Ser. No. 09/577,511, for essentially the reasons explained in that case. No new matter has been added, and the claims as presented are supported in the present application. Approval and entry are respectfully requested.

It is asserted that the subject matter of the present application is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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